

have their names attached as cosponsors.

I thank my colleagues who have come over and participated in this debate and others who have listened. I thank the distinguished Senator, my good friend from Nebraska, for working so hard on this amendment. We will fight on.

We may be idealists, but we will fight on for what we believe in and the integrity of this institution because we firmly believe, to the extent we can, forging a bipartisan consensus is the extent to which we can hopefully regain the full confidence of the American people on what we are doing in Iraq.

I agree with the President, we should not let it slip into a chaotic situation, but we do have some different constructive thoughts as to our strategy ahead.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the Senate to talk about my strong support of the House Joint Resolution 20 that is the joint funding resolution for the current fiscal year we are considering this week.

I am very concerned because we are fast approaching the wire on getting this important resolution passed. If we don't pass this bipartisan bill, the safety of American citizens could be put in danger. If this bill is not passed this week, our air traffic controllers will be furloughed. Our air safety inspectors will be furloughed. If we don't pass this bipartisan bill in the next several days, we are going to see a decline in our ability to provide railroad inspections, pipeline safety inspections, and truck safety inspections.

As chair of the Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing on Appropriations, I am very concerned. I am here to talk about some of the consequences if we don't get our work done on the CR this week. We are going to be feeling the consequences in the area of housing. If we don't pass this bill, hundreds of thousands of Americans are going to face a housing crisis.

Mr. President, 157,000 low-income people could lose their housing if we don't get this bill passed in the next several days; 70,000 could lose their housing vouchers; 11,500 units that are housing the homeless could be lost. Those are some of the consequences Americans will face under my jurisdiction if this Congress fails to pass the joint funding resolution in the next few days.

But don't take my word for it. Last Thursday, I held a hearing with President Bush's very able Secretary of Transportation, Mary Peters. Secretary Peters is not a newcomer to transportation. She has spent her entire career working to ensure safety and execute infrastructure projects,

largely in her home State of Arizona, but she also served as the Federal Highway Administrator.

Secretary Peters told us last week, in very clear terms, how safety would be affected if we failed to pass this joint funding resolution. I share her exact words from a few days ago. Secretary Peters told the Senate:

[I]f we were funded at the '06 levels . . . it would have drastic consequences, not only at the FAA, but as you mentioned with our other safety programs, such as our rail safety programs, our truck inspection programs and of course the air traffic controllers and inspectors at maintenance facilities for the aviation community.

The Bush administration's Transportation Secretary is warning of drastic consequences if we fail to pass this continuing resolution. I am here tonight to talk about some of those consequences. I asked Secretary Peters what it would mean for safety and what it would mean for hiring if Congress doesn't pass this joint funding resolution. President Bush's Secretary of Transportation said:

[W]e will see a serious decline in the number of safety inspectors: Truck safety inspectors, rail safety inspectors, aviation inspectors across the broad range in our program.

That is directly from the President's Transportation Secretary.

I don't think any Senator wants to be responsible for voting for a serious decline in the number of truck safety inspectors, rail safety inspectors or aviation space. I don't think Members want to explain to our constituents we voted to undermine their safety as they travel by car, train or plane. Let me be clear: No one can say Members didn't know how your vote would hurt a State because we have very clear warnings from the Transportation Secretary herself.

The first reason we need to pass this joint funding resolution is to keep our critical safety inspectors on the job, protecting the American people, as they are doing today. We also need to pass a joint funding resolution because, without it, States will not be able to address their most pressing highway, bridge, and road problems. In fact, Secretary Peters also warned us that some States could miss an entire construction season if Congress does not enact this bill.

She said that State transportation commissioners need to know how money will be available to them this year. So she said to us last week at the hearing:

It is especially important to those states who have a construction season that will be upon us very, very shortly and if they are not able to know that this funding is coming and be able to let contracts, accordingly, we could easily miss an entire construction season.

That is what this joint funding resolution is about. Let me be very clear. Your constituents, my constituents, all of our constituents will feel the impact of our vote on roads that are not fixed or roads that remain clogged or congested or unsafe.

Those are a few of the safety consequences if we fail to pass the bipartisan joint funding resolution in the next several days. The failure to pass H.J. Res. 20 will also have a painful impact on housing for hundreds of thousands of Americans. In this bipartisan bill, we worked very hard to make sure vulnerable families would not be thrown on the streets or face out-of-reach rent increases.

We provided some critical support for section 8, homeless assistance grants, housing equity conversion loans, HOPE VI, and the Public Housing Operating Fund.

For Section 8 project-based assistance, this spending resolution we will be considering this week provides an increase of \$939 million over last year's fiscal year 2006 level. It provides \$300 million over the President's 2007 budget request. This is essential, I want my colleagues to know, to preserve affordable housing for 157,000 low-income households. Without this increase, without us acting in the next several days, many of these low-income residents are going to become homeless or be displaced or face unaffordable rent increases.

For section 8 tenant-based assistance, this spending resolution provides an increase of \$502 million, equal to the President's 2007 budget request, to continue to renew expiring vouchers. Without this increase, without us acting in the next several days, more than 70,000 housing vouchers are going to be lost. That means residents may become homeless or displaced or forced into overcrowded housing.

For homeless assistance grants, this funding resolution we are considering provides an increase of \$115 million to meet expiring contracts for homeless individuals and their families. Without this increase, without us acting in the next several days, as many as 11,500 units will not be renewed—not be renewed—forcing these homeless individuals and families back onto the street.

The joint resolution also helps thousands of seniors to stay in their homes because it supports the housing equity conversion loans. Currently, 90 percent of all reverse mortgages for the elderly fall under this guarantee program. Without this language, this popular program will shut down, and it will hurt the ability of thousands of elderly individuals and couples to remain in their homes and pay for critical living expenses.

The joint resolution we are considering this week also extends the authorization for the HOPE VI Program, which is helping us across the country knock down the most deteriorated public housing units and replace them with new, safe housing units for families. If this funding resolution is not adopted this week, not a single dollar will go out for this popular program for the rest of this year.

Finally, this resolution will help housing authorities meet their soaring expenses. This resolution supports the

Public Housing Operating Fund. It provides an increase of \$300 million over the 2006 level to meet the tremendous shortfalls being faced by our public housing authorities when it comes to meeting things such as increased energy costs and providing necessary security to help them prevent crime. Recently, more than 700 public housing authorities have announced layoffs. According to HUD, without this increase—without this resolution—public housing authorities will receive only 76 percent of their true operating needs in this fiscal year. So the consequences will be severe for very vulnerable families if this Congress fails to pass the joint funding resolution by this Thursday.

Mr. President, I want to step back for a minute and share how we developed this bipartisan bill we are considering and how we worked to make sure those critical needs are met.

Today, every agency in the Federal Government, with the exception of the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security, are operating under what is called a continuing resolution. That freezes almost every Federal program at last year's level. If a program is not frozen at last year's level, it is operating at a level consistent with the cuts that were adopted by the House of Representatives last year. So at present, almost all of our Federal agencies are operating under a funding formula that makes no accommodations for the true needs of our agencies or the true needs of the American people. What that means is we are not addressing critical education needs, health care needs, the needs of our veterans,

the needs of law enforcement, transportation, housing—you name it.

The current continuing resolution expires this Thursday, February 15. The time has now come for us in this Congress to finally stand up to our responsibility and implement a spending bill that will meet the needs of the American people. And that bill will be in front of us this week. It is H.J. Res. 20. That bill passed the House of Representatives by more than a 2-to-1 margin. The time has now come for us in the Senate to finally fulfill our responsibility.

H.J. Res. 20 was developed by both the House and the Senate Appropriations Committees on a bipartisan basis. The joint funding resolution, for the most part, freezes programs across the Government at their 2006 funding level. Importantly, however, the bill also makes necessary funding adjustments to deal with critical programs that cannot and should not endure a funding freeze.

In the case of the Transportation Department, we were not about to ignore our responsibility to ensure safety in our skies or on our highways or on our railways. This bill provides funding increases totaling more than a quarter billion dollars to ensure there are adequate numbers of personnel to control air traffic—control air traffic, critical to all of the American flying public. It also provides funds to make sure we inspect and enforce safety rules governing our commercial airliners, trucks, railroads, and pipelines. Without this additional funding—if we do not pass the CR this week—the FAA Administrator told us that she would

be required to put every air traffic controller and every aviation inspector on the street for 2 weeks without pay between now and the end of September.

The joint funding resolution before us this week also boosts funding for Amtrak to \$1.3 billion. Operating under the current continuing resolution, Amtrak's funding would remain \$200 million lower than it was last year. If we do not pass this funding resolution which is before us, we will endanger our passenger rail service across the country, as well as the annual maintenance expenses that must be made to ensure safe operations in the Northeast corridor.

Finally, the bill pending before the Senate provides an additional \$3.75 billion in formula funding for our Nation's highway and transit systems. That funding will serve to create almost 160,000 new jobs while alleviating congestion. It is an important infusion of cash to our States to help them address their most pressing bridge replacements, highway widenings, and safety enhancements. When you look at all the highway needs across just my home State of Washington, that additional \$71 million our State will receive is urgently needed and will be put to work right away.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a table provided to me by the Federal Highway Administration that displays the highway funding increases that will be enjoyed by each and every State be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
COMPARISON OF ACTUAL FY 2006 OBLIGATION LIMITATION AND ESTIMATED FY 2007 OBLIGATION LIMITATION INCLUDING REVENUE ALIGNED BUDGET AUTHORITY
(Including take downs for NHTSA Operations and Research)

STATE	ACTUAL FY 2006 OBLIGATION LIMITATION	ESTIMATED FY 2007	DELTA
ALABAMA	535,056,170	600,869,788	65,813,618
ALASKA	228,288,252	270,731,918	42,443,666
ARIZONA	499,506,758	593,277,405	93,770,647
ARKANSAS	330,837,555	381,949,909	51,112,354
CALIFORNIA	2,381,267,388	2,680,526,468	299,259,080
COLORADO	338,198,419	400,663,892	62,465,473
CONNECTICUT	376,937,736	402,325,874	25,388,138
DELAWARE	104,178,113	121,131,724	16,953,611
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	112,407,878	123,804,359	11,396,481
FLORIDA	1,289,559,918	1,544,927,499	255,367,581
GEORGIA	940,654,903	1,067,010,791	126,355,888
HAWAII	120,644,520	127,596,268	6,951,748
IDAHO	197,536,278	222,829,360	25,293,082
ILLINOIS	898,006,320	1,010,811,302	112,804,982
INDIANA	661,150,145	775,353,318	114,203,173
IOWA	288,499,793	330,589,700	42,089,907
KANSAS	292,376,091	309,772,956	17,396,865
KENTUCKY	460,544,276	520,949,132	60,404,856
LOUISIANA	404,683,450	474,862,364	70,178,914
MAINE	128,192,073	136,355,671	8,163,598
MARYLAND	418,246,584	490,032,577	71,785,993
MASSACHUSETTS	466,003,994	501,926,732	35,922,738
MICHIGAN	828,533,266	909,761,902	81,228,636
MINNESOTA	425,664,013	485,442,279	59,778,266
MISSISSIPPI	310,973,491	367,059,847	56,086,356
MISSOURI	618,465,606	711,268,494	92,802,888
MONTANA	255,215,718	287,386,573	32,170,855
NEBRASKA	197,252,237	223,867,736	26,615,499
NEVADA	172,076,917	210,350,302	38,273,385
NEW HAMPSHIRE	130,407,725	137,769,576	7,361,851
NEW JERSEY	695,744,922	822,265,394	126,520,472
NEW MEXICO	250,952,902	290,194,749	39,241,847
NEW YORK	1,292,715,319	1,366,155,757	73,440,438
NORTH CAROLINA	755,312,308	872,183,722	116,871,414
NORTH DAKOTA	166,994,190	189,098,718	22,104,528
OHIO	951,965,833	1,109,710,100	157,744,267
OKLAHOMA	413,931,430	459,904,524	45,973,094
OREGON	299,292,210	347,410,836	48,118,626
PENNSYLVANIA	1,287,067,418	1,357,719,130	70,651,712
RHODE ISLAND	134,484,666	154,154,462	19,669,796
SOUTH CAROLINA	424,589,865	511,384,433	86,794,568

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION—Continued
 COMPARISON OF ACTUAL FY 2006 OBLIGATION LIMITATION AND ESTIMATED FY 2007 OBLIGATION LIMITATION INCLUDING REVENUE ALIGNED BUDGET AUTHORITY
 (Including take downs for NHTSA Operations and Research)

STATE	ACTUAL FY 2006 OBLIGATION LIMITATION	ESTIMATED FY 2007	DELTA
SOUTH DAKOTA	174,696,675	202,845,805	28,149,130
TENNESSEE	572,103,666	672,761,834	100,658,168
TEXAS	2,183,334,526	2,574,558,747	391,224,221
UTAH	190,146,092	220,645,255	30,499,163
VERMONT	115,678,528	129,379,891	13,701,363
VIRGINIA	697,407,933	830,852,486	133,444,553
WASHINGTON	448,545,807	519,595,013	71,049,206
WEST VIRGINIA	285,867,458	325,592,845	39,725,387
WISCONSIN	520,781,728	586,036,437	65,254,709
WYOMING	174,357,693	207,256,184	32,898,491
SUBTOTAL	26,447,336,756	30,170,912,038	3,723,575,282
ALLOCATED PROGRAMS	9,103,451,278	8,794,320,215	-309,131,063
TOTAL	35,550,788,034	38,965,232,253	3,414,444,219

AMOUNTS INCLUDE FORMULA LIMITATION, SPECIAL LIMITATION FOR EQUITY BONUS AND APPALACHIA DEVELOPMENT HIGHWAY SYSTEM. AMOUNTS EXCLUDE EXEMPT EQUITY BONUS AND EMERGENCY RELIEF.
 ALLOCATED PROGRAMS AMOUNT REFLECT NHTSA TRANSFER OF \$121M.

Mrs. MURRAY. I understand some of our colleagues have apparently suggested we should not adopt this new joint funding resolution. Instead, they have advocated we simply just extend the current existing CR for the remainder of this year. Well, they are saying we should forgo these desperately needed funds for our highways and transit. They are saying we should allow the FAA to furlough all its safety personnel for 2 weeks. They are saying we should allow our aviation, truck, railroad, and pipeline inspection workforce to dwindle.

If we want to keep our air traffic controllers on the job, we have to pass this bill. If we want to keep our air safety inspectors on the job, we need to pass this bill. If we want to keep highway, pipeline, and truck inspections on track, we need to pass this bill. If we want to help our States address their most urgent bridge, road, and highway problems, we have to pass this bill. And if we want to keep our vulnerable families from losing their housing, we have to pass this bill.

The consequences are very high. That is why I came to the floor this evening, to outline to my colleagues, under just my jurisdiction, on the transportation and housing bill, how important this joint funding resolution is and to urge my colleagues to help us move it through this week by the Thursday deadline.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. STABENOW). The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Madam President, am I correct, I was scheduled to speak next?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct. Under the previous order, a Republican Senator, the Senator from New Mexico, is now recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. DOMENICI. Madam President, I want to ask, does the Senator want to speak for a short time?

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Go ahead.

Mr. DOMENICI. The Senator does not mind listening. I thank her so much. I would have yielded, if she had a short speech.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that whatever time I had be extended, if necessary, to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2005

Mr. DOMENICI. Madam President, I rise to speak about the great success of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. I recall when we passed the bill, you, Madam President, and everyone else were, in the well, very happy and joyous that we passed—after 15 or 20 years without one—a major energy bill. And then, right away, the next year, people wanted another energy bill. Now, this year, they want another one.

I would like to tell the Senate why the bill we have is doing so much good and how and why there is still room to try to implement it and, in doing that, to do it a lot more without a new bill. We need a bill to cover some things we did not cover, but I would like to end this, with people understanding this bill provides many things we have not done and many things that have been very successful.

First, I urge policy makers in the administration and Congress to commit themselves to investing time, energy, and economic resources to fully implement this important act. We must achieve all we envisioned in passing this comprehensive energy policy.

This past week marked the 18-month anniversary of the enactment of the Energy Policy Act. I rise today to speak about the gains we have made in strengthening our Nation's energy security and the even greater promise that lies ahead.

On August 8, 2005, the President of the United States signed the Energy Policy Act of 2005 in my home State of New Mexico. This legislation is the catalyst of our Nation's nuclear renaissance and the driving force behind new investments in clean coal technology. Passage of the Energy bill also marks the genesis of a secure American electricity grid and the transformation of an agricultural enterprise into an energy industry.

This act has helped strengthen our energy security, stimulate our economy, create American jobs, and diversify our Nation's fuel supply. Simply put, since the passage of the Energy bill, America is on the move. We are starting up a renewable fuels industry in America through the first ever renewable fuels standard and a production tax credit. These policies have helped create approximately 160,000 American jobs across almost all sectors of our Nation's economy.

In the last 18 months, 73 new ethanol plants have broken ground, spurring us to exceed the biofuel mandate for 2006 by at least 800 million gallons. As a result of the Energy bill, 759 E85 ethanol pumps have been installed around the country. Today, there are over 6 million alternative-fuel vehicles on the road.

I stand here today to tell you that even more can be done. I am pleased President Bush and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have committed to an even stronger, more robust biofuels policy. The President spoke of it. We are all interested in enforcing it and seeing it is done in the biomass area. We will work together on this important energy issue. Chairman BINGAMAN of the Energy Committee and I, as ranking member, will build on our Energy bill success.

Because of the Energy Policy Act, we are making significant breakthroughs in coal—America's most abundant and affordable energy resource. Because of the clean coal provisions in the legislation, there are 159 new coal-based facilities in various planning stages.

Over the next 5 years, the United States will add an estimated 60,000 coal miners to the American workforce. The Energy bill will accelerate the development of a new generation of clean coal technologies. Because of title XIII of the Energy bill, the administration has appropriately and recently announced that it would award \$1 billion in tax credits for clean coal projects such as IGCC projects for electricity generation, gasification projects, and other projects using innovative technologies. With \$650 million in tax credits to